

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 31-51 are canceled. Claims 1-30 and new claims 52-67 are pending in the case.

The Examiner asserts that three distinct inventions are claimed in the pending application. In affirmation of the provisional election made on March 26, 2003, Applicant herein affirms the election of Group I.

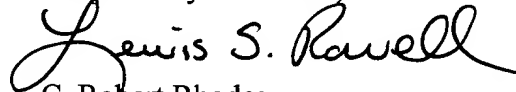
Claims 1-3, 12, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Wyss (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0006757).

Claims 16 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wyss, in view of Stark (U.S. Patent No. 6,008,146).

The applicant appreciates the courtesies extended to Applicant's counsel during an interview on August 20, 2003. During that interview, the Examiners and Applicant's counsel discussed the differences between Applicant's invention and the prior art. As a result of that meeting, Claim 1 is amended and new Claims 52-69 are added herein. Applicant submits that this now overcomes the Examiner's rejections.

The applicant believes that the Examiner's rejections have been successfully overcome, and the application has been placed in condition for immediate allowance. Such action is respectfully requested. However, if any issue remains unresolved, Applicant's attorney would welcome the opportunity for a telephone interview to expedite allowance and issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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